

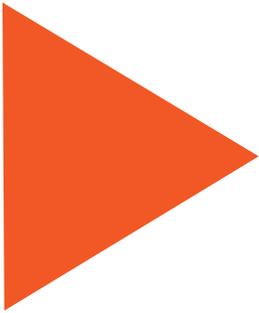
BOARD OF ADVISORS FOR THE UTAH REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE



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LETTER from Chair of the Board of Advisors

Dear Governor Cox,

On behalf of the Board of Advisors, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to share the Refugee Services Office annual report for state fiscal year 2023 (SFY23). This report provides an overview of resettlement in our state and how our team coordinates services on behalf of refugees.

In June we named Mario Kljajo as director of the Refugee Services Office. Working with our department since 2010, Mario held several leadership positions within the Refugee Services, Eligibility Services and Workforce Development divisions. He came to the U.S. in 1997 as a refugee from Bosnia, and his unique perspective and leadership experience have been critical to our success this year.

We also added three new team members to the Refugee Services Office to support housing, sponsorship and Ukrainian arrivals. These individuals are focused on helping refugees access affordable housing, helping sponsors of Ukrainian refugees understand and access services, and guiding groups through the new Welcome Corps private sponsorship program.

This year the traditional pipeline of refugee arrivals reopened. We also saw an influx of Ukrainian and South and Central American arrivals. South and Central Americans are primarily coming as asylees and do not qualify for most of the traditional refugee benefits. I can report that of the 915 Afghan arrivals that came to Utah last year, all are in stable housing, students are enrolled in school, and 75% of households are employed.

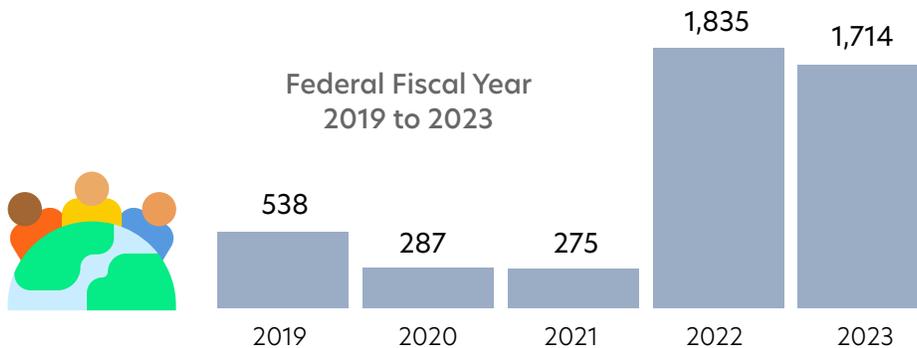
With sponsorship becoming a more established pathway, we have seen the need to build our resettlement infrastructure beyond the Salt Lake Valley. In 2022 we named the Cache Valley Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC) as a state resettlement agency. During the FFY 2023 they resettled a total of 91 refugees and humanitarian parolees. Since 2022, CRIC has fully implemented refugee coordinated case management, created multiple new and exciting programs for refugees, and developed a strong welcoming community network in Cache Valley.

We are honored to work with refugees and help them build successful lives in Utah. Thank you for your continued support of these efforts.

Casey Cameron
Executive Director, Department of Workforce Services

DATA UPDATE

Utah Refugee Arrivals



Types of Refugees

Refugee

Persecution or credible fear of such, as based on a number of internationally recognized criteria.

Humanitarian Parole (Including Venezuelans and Nicaraguans)

Emergency, urgent humanitarian reason, or significant public benefit.

Special Immigrant Visa (SIV)

Provision of aid to the U.S. government abroad.

Asylee

Designated upon U.S. entry; may be accompanied by a temporary parole window, with status finalized by a judge.

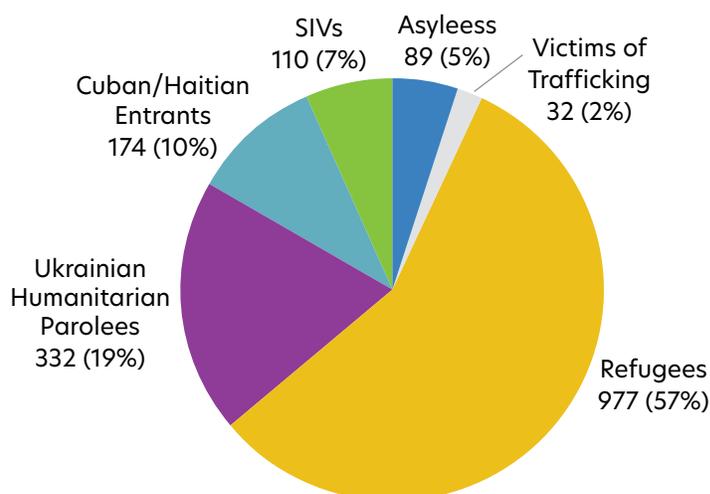
Victim of Trafficking (VOT)

Force or coercion based on a number of internationally recognized criteria.

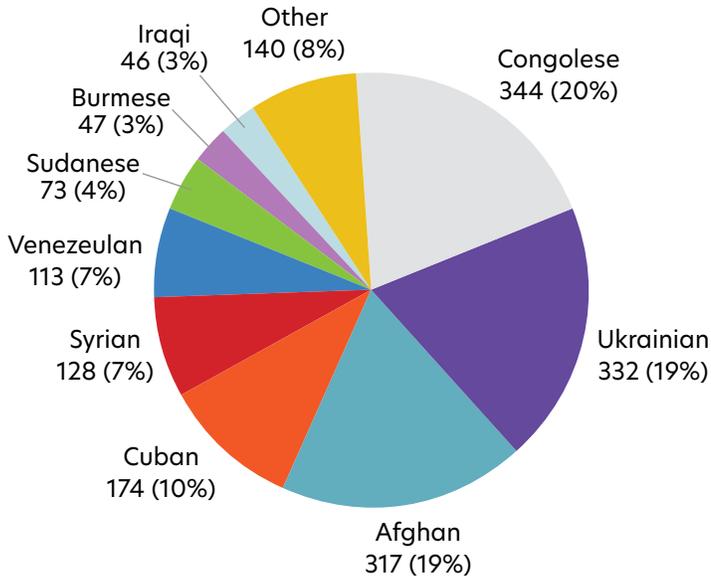
Cuban/Haitian Entrant

Cubans or Haitians who apply for asylum; these applicants may have arrived in the United States legally, be paroled or be without other status.

Arrivals by Type
Federal Fiscal Year 2023



Arrivals by Nationality Federal Fiscal Year 2023



Arrivals by Resettlement Agency Federal Fiscal Year 2023



Refugees, SIVs, Afghan parolees	465	561	84	57
Asylees and VOTs	76	0	0	45
Ukrainian parolees	321	4	7	NA
Cuban parolees	NA	NA	NA	174
Total	862	565	91	276
Total arrivals:	1,794*			

*Includes 80 secondary migrants who are not included in the overall Utah arrival numbers above

Utah Refugee Services Office Funding and Structure

Funding and Collaboration

AmeriCorps VISTA.....	\$25,955
Case Management`	\$888,205
Elderly Services.....	\$142,604
English as a Second Language (ESL).....	\$464,634
Health	\$1,092,509
Refugee Capacity Building Organizations.....	\$198,075
Skills Training and Employment.....	\$44,364
Youth Services.....	\$289,847
Unaccompanied Minors.....	\$4,138,453



Supportive Services

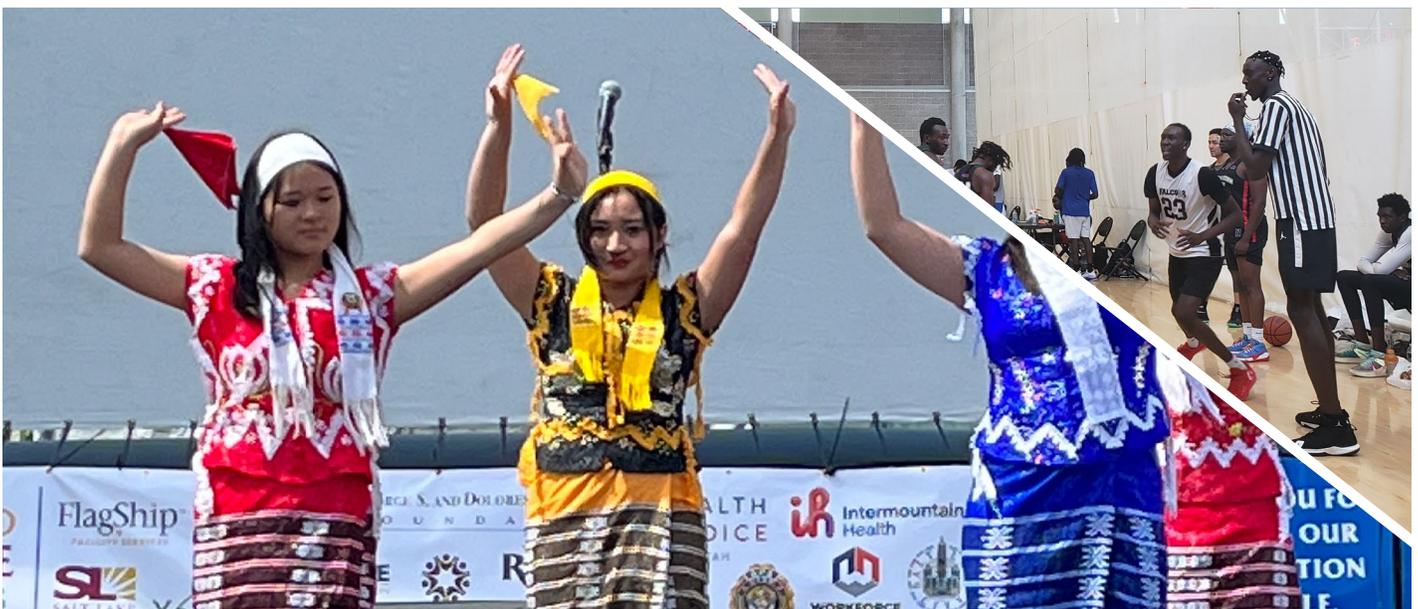
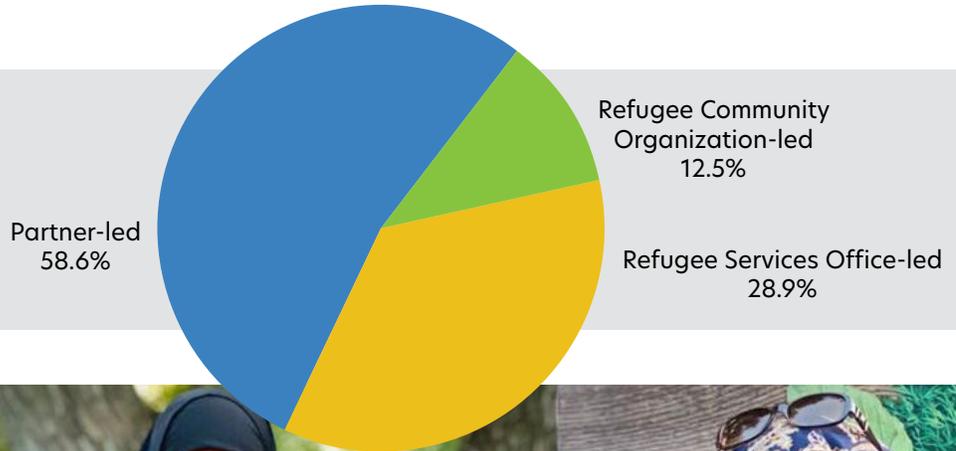
By the numbers*	2021	2022	2023
Refugees served (employment services)	993	1,082	1,691
Job placements	625	589	771
Placement wage	\$13.98	\$15.90	\$17.39
Refugee Center visits	9,364**	16,778	19,172
Utah Refugee Center events & programs	76**	846	705



*Utah Refugee Center numbers are SFY; **SFY21 numbers impacted by COVID-19.



Utah Refugee Center Events and Programs July 2022 - June 2023





Supportive Services

FEP/RCA

The RSO employment counselors serve customers participating in the Family Employment Program (FEP) and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) programs.

- **462** cases successfully closed with a positive closure rate of **97%** for employment or higher earnings
- **88%** case accuracy rate

Sponsorship

In support of the newly-developed WelcomeCorps private refugee sponsorship program, RSO hired a Sponsorship Coordinator to develop resources and foster connections with refugee clients, community-based sponsors and local agencies in support of sponsored refugees statewide.

Upward Mobility

The Upward Mobility Specialist works with refugees to identify a long-term career pathway to gain skills, upward mobility and a family-sustaining wage.

- **340** upward mobility services provided



Occupational Trainings

Together with employers and partners, RSO offers targeted occupational trainings and career pathways to help refugees gain the skills needed for upward mobility.

- **10** occupational trainings offered:
 - Information Technology, Python, Intermediate Python, Java, Intermediate Java
 - Medical Interpreter, Phlebotomy (4 cohorts)
- **109** individuals served
- **75%** average graduation rate
- **\$18.07** average post-training placement wage



Youth Coordination/Programs

The Refugee Youth Services coordinator provides collaboration and support to ensure youth are able to access services equitably.

- **4** RSO youth programs offered
 - **30** youth participants
- Direct support:
 - **105** youth referred to RSO programs and other resources
- Refugee Capacity Building Organization (RCBO) support
 - **8** organizations offering youth programs
 - **353** youth served



Licensed Clinical Therapist Team (LCT)

The LCT Team offers mental health services, resources and general support to help refugees stabilize and rebuild their lives.

- **509** direct services
- **100** referrals to additional resources
- **315** mental health evaluations
- **1,506** case management assessments

Community Team

This team supports successful integration for refugees through capacity building, crisis intervention, education and community connection.

- **1,549** unique services provided, such as interpretation, advocacy, applications, and teaching and making appointments
- **354** referrals to community resources
- **4,384** outreach contacts to individuals
- **343** events focused on economic stability, education, health and life skills

Community Connection

Refugee Capacity Building Grant

The Refugee Services Office supports Refugee Community Based Organizations through the RCBO Capacity Building Grant.

- **16** organizations funded by the Refugee Capacity Building Grant in SFY23; **94%** of organizations successfully completed the grant
- **69%** of organizations were operating independently at the end of the year
- **1,232** individuals served



Refugee Services Office Programs

In collaboration with programs like Know Your Neighbor, the Utah Refugee Center offers several programs for refugees to grow their skills and make connections. This includes a sewing program that provides refugees with social support, life skills and English practice, as well as an adult and youth leadership training program that provides refugees an opportunity to develop their leadership skills to benefit their communities.

1. Sewing

- **3** levels offered
 - 51 participants
 - Participants represented 14 refugee communities, including Afghanistan, Myanmar and Tanzania

2. Adult and Youth Leadership

- **18** Adult Leadership participants (71% graduation rate)
 - **8** students successfully completed a leadership project to help their community, serving over **78** community members through **14** sessions
- **21** Youth Leadership participants (71% graduation rate)
 - **14** students completed leadership projects to enhance their leadership skills
 - **2** students won scholarships for their projects



VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps and one of several national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The program is designed to increase the capacity of organizations to lift communities out of poverty.

- In the past year, 14 members across five organizations raised **\$27,398** in in-kind and cash resources
- **785** community volunteers coordinated to provide program support services, and collaborated with over **132** community organizations to provide education, employment and social adjustment support for newly-resettled refugees



Know Your Neighbor

The Know Your Neighbor Volunteer Program is a collaborative effort between the Salt Lake City Mayor's Office and the Refugee Services Office. Know Your Neighbor's goal is to integrate Utah's welcoming community and refugees resettled in the Salt Lake City area by developing friendships through volunteer opportunities.

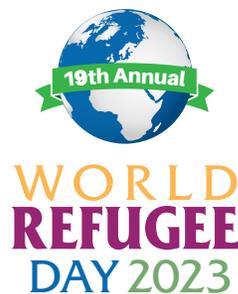
- Over **150** volunteers contributed over **4,000** volunteer hours
- **17** Refugee Services Office programs supported



World Refugee Day

The Refugee Services Office, in collaboration with partner organizations, has hosted a World Refugee Day celebration in Utah every June since 2004. It is an opportunity for the mainstream community to interact with and learn about the refugees who make Utah their home.

- **70+** partner organizations
- **83** volunteers contributed **186** volunteer hours to the event
- **100** refugees and new Americans naturalized during the naturalization ceremony at the Utah State Capitol
- Over **5,000** attendees
- **30** refugee food and market vendors



Afghan and Ukrainian Arrivals

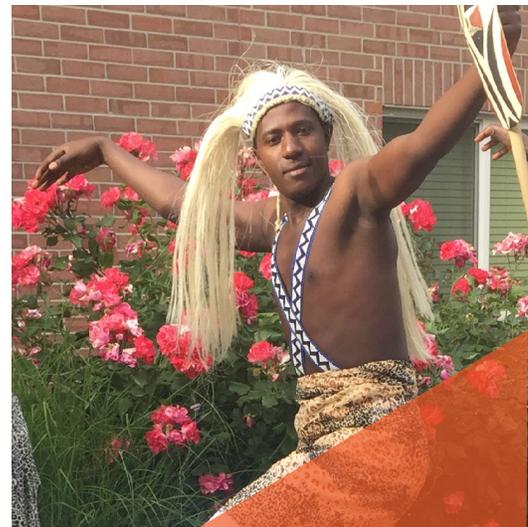
Afghans

- **913** Afghans arrived in Utah as part of Operation Allies Welcome

October 2021 - June 2022 Snapshot



- **Total arrivals:** 915
 - **Under 21 years old:** 481
 - **21-65:** 431
 - **66+:** 3
- **Total households:** 370
 - **Males:** 492
 - **Females:** 423
- **Total Employable households:** 309
 - 75% of households are employed with a higher than average rate of single-income, dual-parent households and high rates of self-employment (Uber and Lyft)
 - 81% of men are employed
 - 30% of women are employed
- All arrivals in long-term housing, students are enrolled in school



Ukrainians

- Approximately **800** Ukrainian parolees

May 2022 - March 2023 Snapshot



- **Total arrivals:** 640
 - **Under 21 years old:** 250
 - **21-65:** 362
 - **66+:** 28
- **Total households:** 320
 - **Males:** 384
 - **Females:** 256
- **Total Employable households:** 271
 - 53% of households are employed (Employment authorization, sponsorship model support and a higher percentage of single-parent households)
 - 50% of men are employed
 - 43% of women are employed



UTAH REFUGEE SERVICES OFFICE OVERVIEW

Refugee Services Office

The Refugee Services Office (RSO) works in collaboration with the Refugee Services Board of Advisors who meet on a quarterly basis to support and advise RSO. The Board of Advisors provides a forum for identifying, addressing and recommending solutions to encourage the successful integration of refugees in the state of Utah.

RSO houses the State Refugee Coordinator and serves as the designated state agency to receive and direct money from the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR).

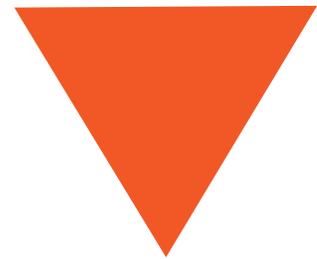


RSO's mission is to coordinate services on behalf of refugees in Utah in a collaborative way through the following service delivery model:

1. Funding and collaboration
2. Supportive services
3. Community connection

Resettlement in Utah

Utah is proud to be recognized as one of the most welcoming states to refugees and as having one of the best refugee resettlement services systems in the country. The Refugee Services Office coordinates resettlement in Utah, managing the majority of federal funding the state receives to support refugees, as well as ensuring ongoing services to refugees for up to five years after arrival. Three local resettlement offices, Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC), Catholic Community Services (CCS), and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), provide initial resettlement services for newly arrived refugees coming to Utah. Services include airport pickup, housing, food, clothing and referral to ongoing services. These initial services last up to 90 days, after which services funded and managed by the Refugee Services Office support refugees including employment, temporary short-term cash and medical assistance, language training, lifeskills training, and connection to the greater community.



More than 65,000 refugees, former refugees and their children live in Utah, the majority of whom are in the Salt Lake Valley.



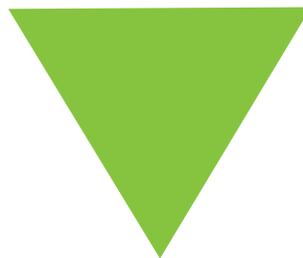
Utah Refugee Center

The Utah Refugee Center houses the Utah Refugee Services Office team and serves as a hub for refugees, the local community and service providers to connect. In addition to providing walk-in support services, space is available for refugee communities and community partners to host events and programs serving refugees.

Refugee Services Fund

The Utah Refugee Services Fund directly supports refugees in Utah as they integrate and become contributing members of our local community. All donations directly support the refugee community. The Refugee Services Fund provides assistance in areas such as:

- Women's programs
- Domestic violence prevention education
- Refugee youth programs
- Emergency housing assistance
- Funerals
- World Refugee Day



The Utah Refugee Center houses the Utah Refugee Services Office team and serves as a hub for refugees, the local community and service providers to connect.





PATHWAY TOWARDS SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

Employment, Language and Training

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Employment Services

The Refugee Services Office employment counselors serve customers participating in the Family Employment Program (FEP) and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) program. RSO's team of employment specialists help ensure refugees are successful in their employment search, job placement and retention. Refugee-focused employment specialists screen and assess applicants, provide workshops and services, and support employers in hiring refugees.

Upward Mobility

The Upward Mobility specialist works with refugees to assess and identify a long-term career pathway to gain the skills needed to achieve upward mobility and a family-sustaining wage. The career pathway can include occupational training programs, relicensing opportunities and English language learning.

Employer Services

The RSO Workforce Development specialist supports both employers and refugees by connecting qualified candidates with employers through recruitment events, employment workshops and training opportunities.

Occupational Trainings

The Refugee Services Office works with employers and partners to offer targeted occupational trainings and career pathways to help refugees gain the skills needed to achieve upward mobility and a family-sustaining wage. Examples of trainings offered include:

- Basic Technology
- Phlebotomy
- Medical Interpreter
- Medical Device Manufacturing
- Warehousing and Distribution
- Information Technology





FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

Humanitarian Center Project

The Humanitarian Center Project was created in 2009 as a partnership between Workforce Services, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and various local refugee service providers. As the only program of its kind in the U.S., the Humanitarian Center is used to teach English and provide job training to 150 newly arrived refugees. This program ensures that students are receiving contextualized English instruction with workforce preparation skills infused in the curriculum for three specific occupational clusters including transportation, health and food service.

Voxy

Voxy EnGen, an online English Language Learning program, allows refugees to improve their English skills daily, without barriers such as transportation and childcare. The Refugee Services Office partners with refugee-serving organizations across the state to enroll and support students in the program.



Youth and Education

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Refugee Youth Coordinator

Supporting refugee youth arriving in Utah is a priority for the Refugee Services Office. Young refugees face a challenging transition both academically and socially. The Refugee Youth Services Coordinator provides collaboration, support and coordination to ensure that refugee youth feel supported and are able to access services equitably. Additionally, RSO's youth coordinator works to build relationships with refugee communities, address gaps and create new programming and opportunities.

FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

Afghan Early Childhood

The Refugee Services Office is contracting with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services to provide an early childhood care coordination program for eligible Afghan families with children. The Integrated Services Program focuses on children age 5 and under. Care coordinators provide care



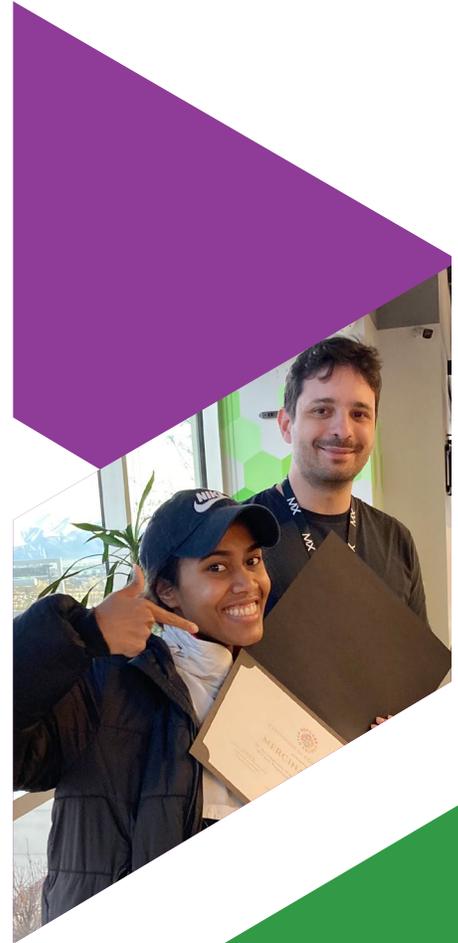
plans, assess family needs and connect families to services. The program focuses on early childhood development, including physical health outcomes, developmental milestones, pre-school and childcare.

Refugee School Impact and Support to Schools

The Refugee School Impact (RSI) and Support to School programs offer resources to new arrivals and refugee students who have been in the U.S. under five years. The purpose of the program is to strengthen academic performance and facilitate social adjustment of school-aged refugees. The Refugee Services Office focuses these efforts on college and career readiness, English language acquisition, newcomer support and school support services coordination. The programs are run in collaboration with the Utah State Board of Education to provide funding and technical support to multiple refugee-serving school districts across the state of Utah.

Youth Mentoring

The Youth Mentoring program was established to promote positive civic and social engagement and support individual educational and vocational advancement. To accomplish this, eligible youth are matched with positive adult mentors who provide personal interaction, as well as facilitate programming to help cultivate youth-initiated mentorships. Case management is also provided to youth to support educational and career development. The RSO funds and collaborates with multiple refugee service providers to offer mentoring services.



Youth Internship

The Refugee Youth Internship Program helps connect refugee youth to internship opportunities to help them gain new employment skills, learn appropriate workplace behavior and acquire knowledge that will help them in preparing for future employment.

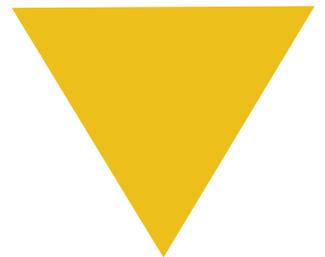
Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

In an effort to assist refugee youth and families in better understanding local laws and the judicial process, the Refugee Services Office and Juvenile Justice and Youth Services (JJYS) increased coordination in 2022. A new position was created within JJYS for a Refugee Youth Coordinator to focus on building relationships and providing education for the refugee community as well as providing individual targeted support to youth and families navigating the juvenile detention system.

Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program

The Refugee Services Office receives funding from ORR to implement the Unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) program. The state contracts with Catholic Community Services, which resettles and supports unaccompanied refugee minors brought to the U.S. by the Department of State. Other populations of unaccompanied minors are eligible for this program as well including Victims of Trafficking, Asylees and Special Immigrant Juveniles, among others.

Services provided through the program include case management, interpretation, cultural education, school coordination, mental health counseling, transportation coordination, vocational assistance, medical services coordination, legal services coordination, family preservation assistance, behavioral needs support, life skills and independent living support, mentoring, and foster parent recruitment, licensing, training, and support.



Housing

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Housing Coordinator

The Refugee Services Office Housing Coordinator connects refugee customers with available housing resources and assistance. The coordinator collaborates with resettlement agencies, landlords, housing agencies and community partners to facilitate housing assistance for refugee customers.

FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing (RESH) and Bud Bailey Case Management

Workforce Services, in partnership with Housing Connect, administers the Refugee Employment Subsidized Housing program for single-parent households who are enrolled in the Family Employment Program (FEP) and are employment ready. Housing Connect provides temporary monthly rental assistance, connects refugees to services, and provides education and advocacy to help refugees maintain stable housing.

- Bud Bailey Case Management – The Bud Bailey Apartment Community has 136 units, with 45 units reserved for housing vouchers

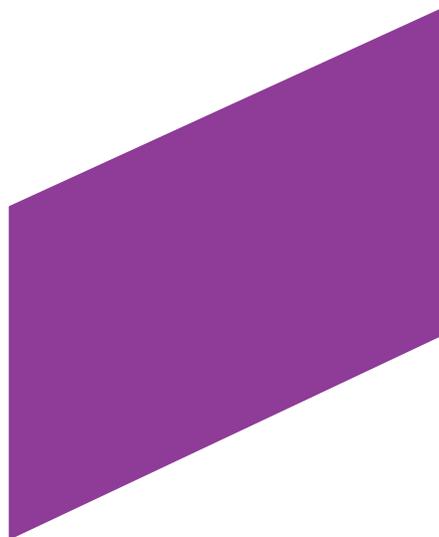
assigned to refugee families. The Refugee Services Office funds case management services in collaboration with Housing Connect for refugees living at the Bud Bailey Apartment complex to ensure that refugees have the knowledge, skills and resources they need to maintain stable housing and move toward self-sufficiency.

Afghan Housing Assistance

As part of the Afghanistan Supplemental Appropriations Act 2022 (ASA) and Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), a sizable number of Afghan arrivals and humanitarian parolees were resettled in a short period of time. To help meet the housing needs of newly arrived Afghans, the Refugee Services Office funds limited emergency rental assistance for Afghan arrivals participating in employment and training programs.

Programs funded include:

- Afghan Emergency Housing
- Employment and Training Rental Afghan Assistance



Health

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Licensed Clinical Therapist Team

The Licensed Clinical Therapist (LCT) Team offers mental health services, resources and general support to help refugees stabilize and rebuild their lives here in Utah. LCTs work with refugees to overcome the many barriers they face so they can integrate smoothly into Utah's community. Using a strengths-based approach, LCTs identify barriers through assessment and direct intervention. They then utilize resources and strategies to overcome obstacles the individual or family faces. Interventions may include direct intervention, advocacy, arbitration, training, psycho-education, mental health treatment, referral to external service providers, and coordination with providers.



FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

Utah Refugee Health Program

Newly arriving refugees often have complex medical conditions that require more intensive and frequent medical treatments. By coordinating activities between local providers, resettlement agencies, local health departments, Workforce Services, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), the Utah Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee Health Program facilitates and promotes programs and services for successful resettlement and integration in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner.

The program focuses on five priority areas:

- Health Screening
- Health Promotion
- Care Coordination
- Mental Health
- Tuberculosis (TB) Control





Community and Family

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Connections Team

The Refugee Services Office Connections Team serves as the initial point of contact for refugees arriving at the Utah Refugee Center. In addition to providing direct employment support, the Connections Team also provides service navigation and referrals for all customers.

Community Team

The Refugee Services Office Community Team supports successful integration for refugees through:

- Capacity Building - Building refugee community resilience that strengthens self-reliance and facilitates integration
- Crisis Intervention - Providing a safety net to assist refugees in crisis resolution
- Education - Increasing knowledge for refugees to remove barriers towards integration

- Community Connection - Linking refugees to resources that move them towards self-sufficiency

In response to the increase in Afghan and Ukrainian refugee arrivals, the Refugee Services Office hired dedicated community specialists to provide culturally appropriate support and resources to help build a solid foundation for Afghan and Ukrainian individuals in Utah.

FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

Case Management

Since 2009, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Refugee Social Services have funded case management for all newly arrived refugees in Utah. Refugee coordinated case management is the foundation of refugee services in Utah, an outcomes-based model resulting in coordinated



service delivery to provide refugees with tools and resources to become more economically and financially stable.

The Refugee Services Office funds four agencies to provide case management for refugees in Utah:

- Asian Association of Utah
- Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection
- Catholic Community Services
- International Rescue Committee

Services for Older Refugees

The Refugee Services Office funds Salt Lake County Adult and Aging Services to develop and administer programs for senior refugees. The purpose of this program is to assist refugee seniors in accessing existing mainstream services in the community including supportive services, citizenship resources, connecting and referring senior refugees to the benefits resources, interpretation and translation services, and training and workshops to address their needs. The goal is to reduce social isolation of senior refugees, integrate them into the community, enhance community connections, and promote health and wellness.

Legal

The Refugee Services Office funds organizations to provide eligible Afghan populations with immigration-related legal assistance, including but not limited to immigration education, adjustment of status, family reunification, navigating the asylum process including application, interview, interpretation, and transportation as needed.

Refugee Leadership Training

The Refugee Leadership Training is an annual program for adults and youth offered in collaboration with Salt Lake Community College and American Express. The goal of the training is to provide refugees an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and connect to resources that will help benefit their communities.

Community Connection

Refugee Community Based Organizations (RCBOs)

Refugee Community Based Organizations (RCBOs) are refugee-led nonprofits that serve the refugee population through a variety of programs, activities and other initiatives that support community growth. Examples of programs offered by organizations include English Language Learners (ELL) classes, assistance in locating suitable housing, employment skills training and job placement assistance, and programs focused on youth and women.

The Refugee Services Office supports an average of 15 organizations per year through the RCBO Capacity Building Grant. The grant measures outcomes in three categories: (1) building organizational capacity, (2) providing educational programs, and (3) facilitating social integration. The objective of this structure is to better allow refugee communities to actively participate in their own integration.

Know Your Neighbor

This program is a collaborative effort between the Salt Lake City Mayor's Office and the Refugee Services Office. Know Your Neighbor's goal is to integrate Utah's welcoming community and refugees resettled in the Salt Lake City area by developing friendships through volunteer opportunities. The program is based on the idea that every refugee in the Salt Lake Valley should have an American friend and that every American should have a refugee friend.

Sewing Program

The Utah Refugee Center houses a sewing program that is entirely run by Know Your Neighbor volunteers. The sewing program provides refugees with social support, life skills and English practice.



World Refugee Day

Celebrated internationally during the third week of June, World Refugee Day (is a celebration of the strength, courage and perseverance of millions of refugees who fled their homes as a result of persecution in search of a better life and a future for their children. The Refugee Services Office, in collaboration with partner organizations, has hosted a World Refugee Day celebration in Utah every June since 2004. It is an opportunity for the mainstream community to interact with and learn about the refugees who make Utah their home.

VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps and one of several national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The program is designed to increase the capacity of organizations to lift communities out of poverty.

The Utah VISTA Project strives to assist refugees in three ways:

1. Integration – Involving and incorporating resettled refugees as equals into the local community
2. Education – Bringing both refugees and the welcoming community members together to learn from each other and work together
3. Programming – Developing programs to assist refugees in the process of integrating into their new home

Public Safety

In November 2015, in response to heightened security concerns surrounding terrorism worldwide, Governor Herbert directed the Utah Department of Public Safety to conduct a review of the federal screening process for refugees and security procedures related to refugee resettlement in Utah. This process led to a partnership between the Refugee Services Office and Public Safety, with a Public Safety officer assigned as a refugee liaison to work with local law enforcement, resettlement agencies and other organizations as a resource for and to build relationships with Utah's refugee community. This is a unique partnership in Utah and nationally, offering programs and services such as:

- U.S. law orientation classes
- Gang prevention workshops
- Law enforcement presentations
- Cultural awareness classes for law enforcement agencies



This public safety program is a unique partnership in Utah and nationally.

SUCCESS STORIES

Customer Success

Lisa, a 17-year old refugee from Ukraine, arrived in Utah in October 2022. In Ukraine, she experienced substantial trauma during the Russian invasion of Bucha, hiding in a basement with her family for 10 days and witnessing the brutality of the occupation. After coming to the U.S. she experienced significant mental health challenges and struggled to socialize and go to school. Her family came to RSO and met with the Ukrainian Specialist, who connected them with the high school debate class, in partnership with the University of Utah. After the first class, Lisa's mother was thrilled to report that it was the first time she'd seen her daughter smiling and laughing since the war. Lisa successfully graduated from the debate class, and was a finalist in the debate competition at the University. Even though she is still in high school, Lisa earned three college credits through the program and is considering applying to the University of Utah for college.

Employee Success

Each year, Gov. Cox recognizes state employees who go above and beyond to serve Utah's citizens. This year, Abdul Baryalai received the Governor's Award for Excellence for his work in helping Afghan refugees resettle in our state. Few individuals, if anyone, had a larger impact on the success of this group than Abdul.

Abdul quickly took to identifying and responding to the needs of these individuals and families. Much of his immediate work revolved around coordinating with the resettlement agencies, non-profit partners, Afghan community leaders, and volunteers to ensure services were delivered and outstanding issues resolved. Abdul's work primarily focused on connecting individuals to housing resources, legal support and leading out on coordination with critical situations. Of the nearly 1,500 Afghans who recently arrived in Utah, Abdul has, in some way, worked with nearly all of them. Abdul has been invaluable to the Refugee Services Office, the Department of Workforce Services and all Afghans resettled to Utah.

Halima Hussein, a dedicated member of the Refugee Services team since 2015 and a well-known leader in the refugee community, received the Lieutenant Governor's Public Service Award. She is among mayors and influential community leaders who have been honored over the years for improving the community through service. Both prior to and during her time at RSO, Halima has been a crucial support and advocate for refugees resettling in Utah. Halima's work is focused on supporting refugee women through education, connection to resources and the development of refugee women's organizations. Halima has led from a human and individual perspective, building lasting relationships and making countless refugee women feel at home in Utah.

Division Success

Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection (CRIC), Utah's newest contracted resettlement partner, completed its first year of services for newly-refugees in Cache Valley. They welcomed 19 Afghan humanitarian parolees during Operation Allies Welcome and successfully helped all gain employment and become integrated into the community. Since 2022, CRIC has fully implemented Refugee Coordinated Case Management, created multiple new and exciting programs for refugees, and developed a strong welcoming community network in Cache Valley. As state and national resettlement numbers increase, CRIC's role will aid in expansion of resettlement support and resources in northern Utah.





CONCLUSION

The Refugee Services Office remains committed to providing the highest quality services and best practices for refugees who now call Utah home. The work continues for both newly arrived refugees and individuals who have lived in Utah for five, 10, 15 or more years. As part of Workforce Services, the Refugee Services Office will continue to develop, fund and support programs and services that allow refugees to become integrated members of the Utah community.



Visit refugee.utah.gov or facebook.com/UTRefugeeServices to learn more about the Refugee Services Office.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program • Auxiliary aids (accommodations) and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling 801-526-9240. Individuals with speech or hearing impairments may call the Relay Utah by dialing 711. Spanish Relay Utah: 1-888-346-3162.

refugee.utah.gov